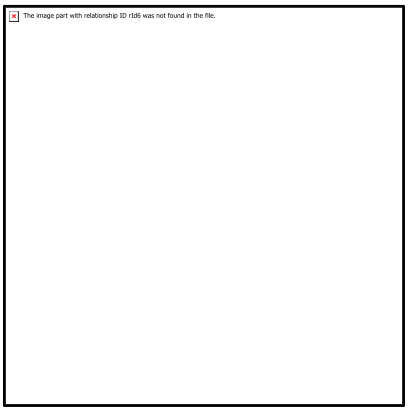
Synopsis On

A Comparative study of Non fictional writings in the selected novels of Virginia Woolf and Anita Desai : A Feminism Perspective



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JV'nDr.Suman Devi]

[Submitted by

JV'nNeha Sharma

Enroll No. 1/22/10007

[Department of English]

[Faculty of Humanities]

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1. INTRODUCTION–

Feminism is the belief in which women should be allowed equal right, opportunities power as men. In other words feminism is an organized efforts to give women the same economic, social and political rights as men. It is based on gender expression, gender, sexuality and sex. Feminism respect women power strength aim and experience. It is a theory chiefly rested upon women's subordination and a political movement. The first major wave of feminism came in the 19th century suffragette movement which gives equal right to women. It is a range of movements and ideologies that share a common goal: to define, establish and achieve equal political, economic, cultural, personal and social rights of women. Feminism is a wider concept all over the world. Women writers become voices of women. Through novels, articles they wants to show women's suffering and devotion and also make realize the society how women are always marginalized, neglected, suppressed by men. The present study deals with feminism in the selected novels of Virginia Woolf and Anita Desai.

Virginia Woolf considered one of the most significant modernist authoress. she was also writer, novelist, essayist, and literary critic of the twentieth century. Adeline Virginia Woolf was born on 25 January 1882 in London. She was born to Julia Prinsep and Leslie Stephen. She belonged to a rich family and was a seventh child of the eight siblings. She had a mixed family: her mother was a celebrated artist's model of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, and had three children from her first husband, whereas her father was a man of letters, and had one daughter from his first marriage. Including the famous painter of modernist movement Vanessa Bell, her parents gave birth to four more children. The brothers received their education from colleges, whereas the girls were given home-tuition in Victorian literature and English Classics. Her family would visit St Ives, Cornwall in summer, which had been a significant influence in the early life of Virginia Woolf. There she, for the first time, saw the Godrevy Lighthouse. This lighthouse became the main subject of her most celebrated novel, To the Lighthouse, published in 1927.

In 1895, Woolf's mother died, and her childhood ended abruptly. The death of her mother gave her a first mental breakdown. After two years of her mother's death, her half-sister and a motherly figure, Stella Duckworth, died, giving her a second mental breakdown.

Virginia Woolf got admission in the Ladies' Department of King's College London from 1897 to 1901. Over there, she studied history and classics and became associated with the early campaigners of higher education for women and movements for Women's rights. Other important influences in her life that inspired her works were the unrestrained access to the vast library of her father and her Cambridge-educated brothers.

In 1900, Virginia was encouraged by her father and started writing professionally. In 1905, her father died that gave her another mental breakdown. After the death of her father, the Stephen family shifted to Bohemian Bloomsbury. Over there, they adopted a free lifestyle. In Bloomsbury, the Stephens family in aggregation, the intellectual friends of Woolf's brothers, they initiated the Bloomsbury Group of art and literature.

Woolf married in 1912 to Leonard Woolf. The couple established a Hogarth Press in 1917. Much of Woolf's works were published in her own publishing house. In Sussex, they rented a home and then, in 1940, permanently shifted there. Her mental illness troubled her throughout her life. She was admitted to the mental hospitals for a long time and tried to kill herself at least twice. Her actual disease could not be diagnosed during her lifetime, but it is assumed that she might have bipolar disorder. On 28 March 1941, Woolf put rocks in her coat pockets and drowned herself in River.

2. FEMINISM IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S WRITINGS

Virginia Woolf also gained a central position in the feminist movement of 1970. She inspired feminism through her works and gathered much attention and pervasive admiration for her works supporting feminist criticism. Her works are not only read by English people but also by people with different languages as her works have been translated into more than fifty languages.

Woolf is observed as one of the leading feminist writers. She has been admired for her theoretical works and fictional works on feminism. It was her essays, including the most

celebrated essay, *A Room of One's Own,* that she was regarded as a feminist; however, her feminist perspectives can also be observed in her fiction.*Orlando*(1928) established heart height of her career as defender of the social freedom for women. *The wave*(1931) was another very important novel of this writer where the symbolism and use of images, sounds and colors is very remarkable. Some of the last important works of her career are *The years* (1931), *Three Guineas* (1938) and *Between the Act* published in 1941, shortly before her death. There is a symbiotic relationship between feminism and Virginia Woolf. Woolf's works center around the lives and histories of women; nonetheless, our perception and reception about Virginia Woolf are also shaped by feminist criticism. When the field of Feminist criticism began, it was soon blasted by the works of Virginia Woolf.

Anita Desai, christened as Anita Mazumdar, was born on 14 June 1937 in Mussoorie, a quaint little hill-station close to Delhi. Born to a German mother, Toni Nime, and a Bengali businessman father, D.V. Mazumdar, Anita had an unorthodox upbringing, which in turn helped to nurture writing aspirations in her young mind. During her early years, she spent much time learning German, Bengali, Urdu, Hindi and English that compounded her passion for literature. She received her early education from Queen Mary's Higher Secondary School in Delhi after which she went on to earn a bachelors degree in English Literature from Miranda House, University of Delhi in the year 1957. In 1958, she married Ashvin Desai.Anita married at a very young age, soon after she graduated from Delhi University in the year 1957. She married Ashvin Desai, who was the director of a computer software firm and was the writer of the book 'Between Eternities: Ideas on Life and The Cosmos'. Ashvin and Anita had four children in the following years. Among them Kiran Desai happened to follow her mother's footsteps and apparently happens to be an equally famous, if not less, than her mother.now shelives in Bombay. She is the winner of Sahitya Academy Award

3. FEMINISM IN ANITA DESAI'S WRITINGS

The Purpose of Anita Desai's writing is to discover for her self and then describe and convey truth. Gifted with her perception , She preoccupied herself with the feminine sensibility which is unique in the annals of the Anglo- Indian novels. She depicted a socio- cultural changes and issues of female freedom and empowerment. She focus on theme of merital discord and relationship problem.most of her novels depict women trapped into unhappy marriage or unhappy homes. Anita Desai is a standout contemporary woman wtiters of Indian fiction in English.As from the novels it has been discovered that Anita Desai is more inspired by the investigation of Female psyche managing thoughts, feelings and sensation at different levels of cognizance.promote in her novels it is discovered she is propelled by D.H Lawrence, Virginia woolf as she utilizes strategy utilized by them before. Her first novel, "Cry the peacock" was published in1963. This novel is based on the disharmony between husband and wife relationship. In her novel, "Voices in the city" (1965), Desai depicts the incompatible marriage of Monisha and Jiban. "Where shall we go this summer"? (1975) is another novel written by Anita Desai woven with feminist message.' In custody' is the novel written by Anita Desai in 1984. Its theme is about the searching for identity and meaning in life. Anita Desai was one of the respective novelists of that period. Some her other major works are 'fasting-feasting' (1999) , Journey to the Ithaca (1995), Baumgartner's Bombay (1988) known for social realism, patriarchy, women and their struggle etc.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the present research work are to study, discuss, identify and to interpret Virginia woolfand Anita Desai's selected novels and thereby to place them in the belief of Indian English Literature.

1. To study the novels of Anita Desai and Virginia woolf and to enhance the knowledge of English Literature.
2. To comprehend the portrayal of women characters and their socio-cultural roles.
3. To study the social and familial problems of women in India.
4. To throw light on the status of women.
5. To study the social contribution of the novelist.

6. To study the effect of work culture on women.
7. To study the men- women relationship in light of feminism.
8. To explain man dominance in 20th century.
9. To understand the term 'feminism'.
10. To see how both novelist stands apart in the history of Indian feminist literature.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

M.K. Bhatnagar, (2008)

"Anita Desai s work represents a unique blending of the Indian and the western. Her novels catch the bewilderment of the individual psyche confronted with the overbearing socio-cultural environment and the ever-beckoning modern promise of self-gratification and self-fulfilment. In the face of this dual onslaught, her protagonists, male or female Maya, Sita, Monisha and Amla; Sarah, Nanda and Raka; Bim and Tara; Devan, Baumgartner are seen poised rentalizingly at different junctures of the philosophic spectrum."

Dr. M. Rajeshwar (2000)

"Maya, the central character in Anita Desai's Cry The Peacock is obsessed almost from the beginning of the novel with the gloomy prophecy of an Albino astrologer. According to the prophecy, she or her husband would die during the fourth year of her marriage.
Her father dismisses the prophecy as nonsense and orders that it should be forgotten. Obeying his wish, Maya keeps the prophecy rigorously repressed in her unconscious until her marriage with Gautama enters the fourth year."

Dr. S. P Swain (2000)

"From fire to light, Clear Light of the Day dwells on existentialist theme of time in relation to eternity. Existentialism which is basically concerned with the enduring human predicament in relation to unchanging human destiny has been the sole concern of Anita Desai. Desai quotes in the last pages of her novel a very significant line from Eliot's Four Quartets: "Time the destroyer is time the preserver."It is time which brings about a change in the lives of the characters in the novel.

The childhood intimacy of the four children—Tara, Bim, Raja and Baba is gradually lost as they grow older and become aware of their variegated dreams and aspirations. Anita Desai presents their polarities of personalities through images of sound and silence."

Dr. M. Mani Meitei (2008)

"In her fourth novel, Where Shall We Go This Summer?(1975), Anita Desai presents an intense identity crisis of the central character Sita, a sensitive woman in her early forties. Unable to live in the strife-torn present, she is in the throes of identifying herself with the past, represented by her childhood on Manori island twenty years ago. The past becomes a psychic residue in her 'personal unconscious', the backdrop of her life and her obsessive preoccupation with it gives her the strength to leave her home, husband, two children and the urbanized life of Bombay for Manoriisland, where she thinks she would be able to live under a magic spell":

"She saw that island illusion as a refuge, a protection.

It would hold her baby safely unborn, by magic".

Dr. Kanwar D. Singh (2011)

"Anita Desai's novel Baumgartner Bombay(1988) focuses on the vicissitudes, discrimination and persecution suffered by a person who is uprooted and supplanted away from one's roots, thereby losing anchor and failing to get recognition and conviviality anywhere else. Hugo Baumgartner, the protagonist of the novel is forever in exile once he leaves his home/land. The notions of race and native land come out strongly in the delineation of Hugo."

Dr. V Sreenathachary (2011)

“Like Virgina Woolf, Anita Desai's preoccupation is with the inner world of sensibility rather than the outer world of action. She traces the impact of the outer events on the inner consciousness of the character. The emphasis is on the impact of sights and sounds and physical movements on the consciousness of her characters. To convey this stream of consciousness, she uses a style that is supple and suggestive and a language that is poetic. The use of symbols, therefore, becomes inevitable.”

Dr. Depshikhasingh (2014)

“ Virginia'saim is not only to describe or analyze alienation butsomething more, something aiming at liberating men from the dark caves ofalienation and recovering the sun-shine of hope and happiness. She makes hercharacters to pursue reality behind appearance and offers them instruments ofachieving social integration as well as the experience of timeless moments. Virginia Woolf and Anita Desai are interested more infemale alienation than in the male alienation. Both of them produce giantfemale characters, exemplify ing the varieties of loneliness. It can be safelyassumed that for all intents and purposes, their writings are dominated by theirfeminine concerns.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:-

Comparative study between Anita Desai and Virginia woolfwilbe the central agenda of this research. The basic Concepts of feminism, male–dominated society, society framing ‘ ideas’, Women’s Suffrage, Status of women in 20th, Social contribution of these novelist will be fully explored and explained. The present study (Research Work) doesn’t refered to any field work.

7. DATA COLLECTION:-

The data required for the present Research will be collected in two ways as-

7.1 Primary Data :

Primary data will be the novels written by Virginiawoolfand Anita Desai , which are selected for further, minute study. These novels include-

Virginia Woolf- 1. A room of one's own (1929)

2. Mrs. Dalloway(1925)

3. The three Guineas (1938)

Anita Desai 1. Cry, ' The peacock' (1963)

2. In Custody (1984)

3. "Where shall we go this summer"? (1975)

7.2 Secondary Data:

Secondary data is a data that is already collected by someone others . In this research Secondary datawill be collected from the different books, journals, articles, reviews, critical analysis, web materials, news papers, different reports published on the Anita Desai and Virginia Woolf and selected novels for further study in the present research.

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